



# St. Ambrose Barlow

## Catholic Primary School

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St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, 841 Shirley Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 9JJ

Friday 15th December 2023

Dear Parents,

Thank you to all the children from Year One and Year Two who led their Nativity performances with such gusto. The singing was incredible, the acting was wonderful, and the central message very special. Thanks also to Mrs Hunt and Miss Hookes, Mrs O'Driscoll and Mrs Fayaz for the costumes, the direction, the production, the endless patience, and the innate sense of rhythm displayed throughout. *Feliz Navidad!*

The production has been recorded and once we work out the best way to share it, we will! The adults and children have relaxed today with their trip to the Mac theatre, which was brilliant and everyone loved it!

### Golden Book

**Reception:** Yousuf Ahmed for showing such a fantastic attitude towards his work this week! Yousuf has worked very hard with his letter formation, showing great determination and resilience. He is growing in confidence every week! Keep up the hard work, Yousuf!

**Year One:** Bertie Wardle for his brilliant 'can do' attitude. He attempts every task with confidence and a fabulous positive attitude. Bertie's handwriting is amazing and he is able to show good letter size and formation in every piece of writing he does. Bertie was also a star in our nativity play- his executed his 'grumpy guest' line so well - we all hope he finds some spa facilities after all his hard work this year so far! Well done, Bertie!

**Year Two:** Erin Jackson has shown excellent perseverance over the past few weeks. She tries so hard in everything she does! Her performance in the nativity was amazing! Erin has been so determined even more so recently; she is getting increasingly confident in responding in lessons too! We are so proud of you, Erin - keep it up!

**Year Three:** Ethan Velasquez for being such a superstar! He always works hard, trying his best in everything he does. When faced with a challenge, he does not give up showing determination and resilience. He is kind and helpful and always has a smile for his friends and teachers. Thank you, Ethan!

**Year Four:** Orlaith Quinn for her fabulous twist of a story on 'How To Train A Dragon' and her contagious enthusiasm for learning is a wonderful example for the rest of her class. Keep up the fantastic work, Orlaith!

**Year Five:** Noah Parkes-Brown for consistently displaying his values and virtues every day. Noah always impresses in class with his behaviour and work ethic and is always someone you can rely on to be setting a great example for his peers. In addition, this week he wrote a wonderful version of the Benedictus prayer and impressed with his knowledge and vocabulary.

**Year Six:** Cody Davies for being kind, caring and considerate. Cody always does his best to help others and is always on hand with an encouraging word to make people feel happy. He particularly impressed all of the staff at the Dementia Cafe last Friday with his compassion and thoughtful attitude. Keep it up, Cody!

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With **St. Ambrose Barlow** as our guide and **Jesus** at our side,  
we are all **learning to live, love and work together.**

### **Wednesday Word**

Please find attached the Wednesday Word for the whole of the Christmas break, containing the Gospel for the next four Sundays.

Below is the Gospel for this Sunday, which is *Gaudete* Sunday. The witness of John the Baptist gave people a sense that something exciting was about to happen. Now the focus of Advent shifts from preparing for the second coming of Jesus, to looking at the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, two thousand years ago.

Gospel

John 1:6-8,19-28

**'There stands among you the one coming after me'**

A man came, sent by God.  
His name was John.  
He came as a witness,  
as a witness to speak for the light,  
so that everyone might believe through him.  
He was not the light,  
only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:  
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.

It is also Bambinelli Sunday, which was first instituted by St. John Paul II. On the Third Sunday of Advent, children are encouraged to bring the baby Jesus (*'bambinelli'*) from each of their Nativity sets to Church, where Father Paul will bless the figures.

### **KS2 @ Old Rep**

In a slight change to proceedings, this trip for KS2 children will take place on Tuesday 19th December, not Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> as originally planned.

### **Christmas Carol Service**

The children of KS2 will lead our prayer service on Tuesday night at 7pm. Please come along to this wonderful occasion – all are welcome! Come and celebrate with us, and prepare for Christmas in a wonderfully joyous and prayerful manner.

Every child is essential in helping to lead the service. They are asked to arrive to the parish hall between 6:15 and 6:30 in their shirt and tie. After the service, this is where they can be collected from.

### **Kidzone @ SAB**

Please be aware that while our morning club will run as normal on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, the after-school club will not take place and all children must be collected at 2pm.

### **A thank you for your generosity**

I hope you will agree with me that it was a selfless act for the children to ask to forego a small present and instead donate the equivalent amount to our Advent charities. These brown envelopes are rolling in now and will be counted and passed to our two Advent charities: Father Hudson's (specifically, their partnership project between the Infant Jesus Sisters, the parish of St Philip Neri and the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, which welcomes the stranger in our midst and reaches out to the hidden poor in Sandwell and Birmingham) and our overseas link, the Rwandan Schools' project, which for many years has been supported by Birmingham Catholic primary schools.

### **Parish Christmas Fair**

This is all booked in for Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December, complete with Santa's grotto, various stalls, cake and hot drinks, and a bottle tombola. It starts at 2pm and lasts until 4pm. Please come along and support the parish!

### **INSET Day**

School remains closed on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January due to staff INSET – training on positive handling and de-escalation techniques. School will re-open for children on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January, with our Breakfast Club accepting students from 7:30 and our gates opening at 8:45.

### **School closed for voting**

Birmingham's Election Office intend to use the school on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May for the Police and Crime Commissioner and West Midlands Combined Authority Mayoral Elections. School will be closed to all children on this day.

### **Maths INSPIRE workshops**

These have been arranged for the Spring term. The format will be a lesson that takes place at 9am in the hall, to which parents are invited, to learn more about the resources we use in school and the teaching methods that the teachers employ. Please see the dates below for advanced notice of when the workshops are taking place:

Tues 16th Jan:	Year Six
Thurs 18th Jan:	Year Five
Tues 23rd Jan:	Year Four
Thurs 25th Jan:	Year Three
Tues 30th Jan:	Year One
Thurs 1st Feb:	Year Two
Tues 6th Feb:	Reception

### **Birthdays this week...**

Happy birthday to Theresa in Year One who is six tomorrow, and to Selina in Year Six who is eleven on Sunday.



### **December dates for your diary**

**Sat 16<sup>th</sup> Dec:** Parish Christmas fair 2-4pm  
**Tues 20<sup>th</sup> Dec:** KS2 Old Rep for 'Peter Pan'  
**Tues 19<sup>th</sup> Dec:** KS2 Carol Service 7pm  
**Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> Dec:** Christmas Jumper Day / Christmas dinner  
**Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec:** Whole School Mass (including Reception) 9:30  
**Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec:** School closes for Christmas at 2pm

### **January dates for your diary**

**Mon 8<sup>th</sup> Jan:** School closed for staff INSET  
**Tues 9<sup>th</sup> Jan:** School re-opens for children  
**Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six Parent Meeting 6pm parish hall  
**Fri 12<sup>th</sup> Jan:** First Mass of New Year 9:30am at church  
**Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six children Confirmation workshop 10am-12pm  
**Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six Mass 10am  
**Tues 16<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six Maths INSPIRE workshop 9am  
**Thurs 18<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Five Maths INSPIRE workshop 9am  
**Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Four class assembly 9am  
**Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six Confirmation sponsor workshop 2pm  
**Fri 19<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six Confirmation 7pm  
**Tues 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan:** Year Four Maths INSPIRE workshop 9am  
**Wed 24<sup>th</sup> Jan:** School choir at Young Voices  
**Thurs 25<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Three Maths INSPIRE workshop 9am  
**Fri 26<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Five Class Mass 2:30pm

Have a relaxing weekend. I hope to see you at the parish fair this Saturday and I know Father Paul wants to welcome all children this weekend at Mass for the blessing of the 'bambinellis'.

  
Mr Clinton



Wishing you a blessed Christmas from your School



**"The Birth of Jesus brings us the good news that  
we are loved immensely and uniquely by God"**

*Pope Francis*



Wednesday  
13<sup>th</sup> December



Good News  
for Families

## Enjoy reading this Sunday's Gospel

A man came who was sent by God. His name was John, John the Baptist. He came as a witness – as a witness to Jesus Christ. Priests were sent from Jerusalem to ask John, "Who are you?" John replied, "I am not the Christ." "Are you the prophet Elijah then – or the Prophet?" they asked. He answered, "No." "So, who are you?" they asked. "What have you to say about yourself?" John replied, "I am the voice of the one who cries in the wilderness: 'Make the Lord's way straight.'" Finally they asked him, "Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John said, "I baptise with water. But someone is coming soon who is more powerful than I am." This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the River Jordan, where John was baptising.



From the Gospel of Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2023 John 1:6-8. 19-28 (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Year B)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Now enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **JOY**.



2

Wednesday's Word is

JOY



"Dear young people, if we are close to Jesus, we will have joy in our hearts and a smile on our face." Pope Francis

Who did John the Baptist come to tell the people about? This weekend we celebrate the third Sunday of Advent which is known as 'Gaudete Sunday', and we light the pink candle on our advent wreath. The word 'Gaudete' in Latin means 'Rejoice!'. We joyfully celebrate that Christmas is near – we rejoice that Christ is coming. Ask your child what the word 'joy' means to them. Each of you say who or what makes you feel joyful. When do you feel joyful? When was the last time you brought joy to others and what did you do? God wants us to be filled with joy – Jesus came to make our joy complete. Happiness comes and goes, but the joy that comes from close friendship with Jesus stays forever.

"Joy is very infectious; therefore, always be full of joy." St Teresa of Calcutta

Joy is something we all desire. We don't have to search around for joy: it comes from within. When we follow Jesus by loving God and others, we are filled with joy! A joyful heart is a sign of God's Spirit within us. What can you do to help bring joy to others in this coming week? Perhaps you can: give lots of smiles; give someone a gift; remind someone that they are loved by God; cheerfully do what our parents or teachers ask us to do. In these ways we prepare our hearts to be filled with a joy that lasts long after the Christmas festivities have passed.



Dear Lord Jesus, please help our family to experience the joy that you bring, and to share your joy with all those that we meet. Amen.

WEDNESDAY  
WORDSEARCH

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**

PRIESTS  
ASKED

JOHN  
REPLIED

SOMEONE  
SOON

JESUS  
CHRIST

SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**

N	H	O	J	S	D	J	R	H	C	J
D	E	I	L	P	E	R	E	L	H	T
E	S	O	M	E	O	N	E	S	R	K
D	E	K	S	A	J	N	A	P	I	T
L	P	J	S	O	O	N	P	H	S	A
J	R	T	E	E	H	J	E	I	T	S
E	I	E	M	O	N	S	R	E	P	H
S	E	O	L	O	U	H	D	L	J	K
U	S	M	O	S	C	A	S	K	E	D
S	T	S	E	I	R	P	T	M	O	S
J	S	J	L	R	E	P	L	I	E	D



Cross out the letters **c d a** in the 4 jumbled words to find 4 real words.

dasocon podwercfaul Jochand disca

\_\_\_\_\_ the Baptist said, "Someone \_\_\_\_ coming  
\_\_\_\_\_ who is more \_\_\_\_\_ than I am."

In this Sunday's Gospel, the humble witness of John the Baptist gave people a sense that something exciting was about to happen. John delivered the joyful news of God's arrival into our world in the person of Jesus – he recognised Jesus as the Christ.

We often don't recognise Jesus when he comes, when he is standing among us.

But be assured: Jesus is always with us, waiting to fill us with joy.



Wednesday  
20th December

Five Minutes  
Family Time

Good News  
for Families

## 1 Enjoy reading the Gospel

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man called Joseph. The virgin's name was Mary. "Rejoice, favoured one!" said Gabriel. "The Lord is with you." Mary was disturbed and asked herself what he could mean. "Do not be afraid, Mary," the angel continued. "You have found favour with God. Listen! You will conceive and bear a son and you will call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High and his kingdom will never end." "How can this be," questioned Mary, "since I am a virgin?" "The Holy Spirit will come down upon you," the angel said, "and you will have a child who will be called the Son of God." "I am the servant of the Lord," Mary replied. "Let it happen just as you have said." Then the angel left her.



From the Gospel of Sunday 24th December 2023 Luke 1: 26-38 (the 4th Sunday of Advent, Year B)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **MARY**.

## 2 "Mary is the one who says 'Yes'. Mary's life shows that God accomplishes great deeds through those who are the most humble." Pope Francis

**What did Mary say just before the Angel Gabriel left?** Each year on the last Sunday of Advent, we look to Mary, our heavenly mother. In this Sunday's Gospel, the Angel Gabriel announced God's will, and Mary accepted it and put her trust in God. Ask your child if they know the 'Hail Mary', the prayer based on the Angel Gabriel's greeting in this Sunday's Gospel. Ask your child what else they know about Mary. It may help your child to tell them something you know about Mary, or the Rosary.

## 3 "Let the model of Mary be reflected in our lives." Pope Francis

**Mary is a perfect example for all people – someone full of love and kindness.** How can you show love and kindness in this final week of Advent? Perhaps you can: support a charity that helps to feed some of the poorest children in the world (e.g. [marysmeals.org.uk](http://marysmeals.org.uk), [missiontogether.org.uk](http://missiontogether.org.uk) or [cafod.org.uk](http://cafod.org.uk)); help someone who may be struggling in some way. What other ways can you think of? You may like to finish your time of prayer by saying together, on behalf of another person, a 'Hail Mary' (please see below) or find out more about the Rosary: [cbcew.org.uk/category/prayer/rosary/](http://cbcew.org.uk/category/prayer/rosary/)

Hail, **Mary**, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy **Mary**, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

This week I will try my best to...

.....  
.....



Wednesday  
27th December

Five Minutes  
Family Time

Good News  
for Families

## 1 Enjoy reading the Gospel

When Jesus was a baby, his parents, Mary and Joseph, took him up to the Temple to present him to God and make an offering of two young pigeons. Now in the Temple there was a good and holy man named Simeon. The Holy Spirit had promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen Jesus, the Light of the World. Prompted by the Spirit, Simeon came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to make their offering, Simeon took Jesus into his arms and blessed God; and he said: "Now, I can die in peace because you have kept your promise. This child, Jesus, will be a light for all nations." Jesus' parents took him back to Nazareth where Jesus grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.



From the Gospel of Sunday 31st December 2023 Luke 2: 22-40 (the Feast of the Holy Family, Year B)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **FAMILY**.

## 2 "All God's children, of every people and language, are invited and called to be part of this great family, as brothers and sisters and sons and daughters of the one Father in heaven." Pope Francis

**Who took Jesus to the Temple?** This Sunday we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family of Nazareth (Jesus, Mary and Joseph). In the Gospel we read about the Holy Family's openness and obedience to God. Ask your child what the word 'family' means to them. Ask them what they like best about their family. It may help your child to tell them something that you like best about the family.

## 3 "Dear families, always live in faith and simplicity, like the Holy Family of Nazareth!" Pope Francis

**Christmas is a special time for families.** In what ways can we bring more of God's love and joy into our family and other families this Christmas? Perhaps we can: make an extra effort to be thoughtful; contact someone you may not have seen for a while and make them feel especially valued – maybe a relative who lives on their own, or a friend. As a family (if possible), come and light a candle in Church this Sunday. You can learn more about this celebration of the Feast of the Holy Family at: [cbcew.org.uk](http://cbcew.org.uk)



Dear Lord Jesus, please protect all our **families** with your loving care. Help us to be patient, kind, understanding, generous and welcoming to anyone in need – especially this Christmas. Amen

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

This week I will try my best to...

.....  
.....



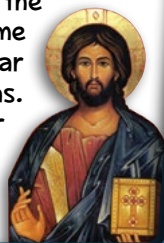


**Wednesday**  
3<sup>rd</sup> January

**Good News  
for Families**

## Enjoy reading this Sunday's Gospel

Jesus was born in Bethlehem when Herod was king. Wise men came from the East to Jerusalem and said, "Where is the child born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star in the sky and have come to worship him." King Herod was very worried. He called together all the priests and teachers and asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In the town of Bethlehem, in Judaea," they said. So Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem and said, "When you have found the child let me know, so that I too may go and worship him." So they set off. The star went before them and stopped over the place where the child Jesus was. The wise men knelt down and worshipped Jesus. They opened their treasure and offered him gifts - gold and frankincense and myrrh. Then God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod, so they returned home another way.



Taken from the Gospel of Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024 - Matthew 2: 1-12 (the Feast of the Epiphany)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **GUIDANCE**.



**"Let us draw from the crib the joy and deep peace that Jesus brings to the world."** Pope Francis

**2**

**Wednesday's Word**

**GUIDANCE**

**"Jesus came so that our life might be guided by God."** Pope Francis

**What guided the wise men to Jesus?** This Sunday the Church celebrates the Feast of the Epiphany. We remember how the wise men from the East were guided to Jesus. Ask your child what the word 'guidance' means to them. Who guides them through life, to make sensible and wise choices? Who or what guides you on your journey through life? The Church exists to help us and provides us with the timeless guidance of the Bible and the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church'. These are manuals for life which can guide us on our journey.

**"May Christ's love guide our steps."** Pope Francis

**As we journey through life to God, we need good guidance to help us along the way.** Ask your child if they know some of the ways in which Jesus guides us today. Perhaps it is through: listening to good and wise people; learning Church teaching; being open to correction; prayerfully considering what effect our words and actions might have on ourselves and others; reading the gospels together; going to church and listening carefully; praying to Jesus for guidance. **Are you, or any members of your family, planning New Year's resolutions for 2024? If you haven't already started, why not resolve to head into 2024 on a spiritual journey as a family - to be guided by God? Wishing you and your family a happy and blessed New Year.**



Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for your **guidance** - for being there to guide our family on our journey together through life. Amen.

**WEDNESDAY  
WORDSEARCH**

**SMARTSEARCHERS** FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**

**SKY  
STAR**

**GUIDED  
BETHLEHEM**

**WISE  
MEN**

**WORSHIP  
JESUS**

**SUPERSEARCHERS** FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**

G	U	I	D	E	D	J	E	S	U	S
S	K	Y	P	I	H	S	R	O	W	M
N	M	M	E	H	E	L	H	T	E	B
A	E	C	W	W	D	S	V	N	E	M
Q	N	I	R	O	I	E	U	X	W	R
R	S	Z	L	R	S	E	D	S	O	W
E	A	S	J	S	T	B	W	I	E	S
B	K	T	F	H	A	J	I	K	U	J
Y	C	O	S	I	R	V	S	B	E	G
O	I	D	E	P	M	S	E	J	C	A
F	A	B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M

Cross out the letters **e u n** in the 4 jumbled words to find 4 real words.

esanwu    nustear    sunkey    ewornshup  
"We \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ and  
have come to \_\_\_\_\_ him"

**Write** a promise and then **draw** a big smile on Smiley

My New Year resolution for 2024 will be to.....



# WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH



Y M A R Y J V F A M I L Y T M  
G N K M E H E L H T E B B A G  
B A A H G E V B G A G S R C B  
S V L H D P A I U I A Y R J E  
Y B N I T S M H F C L P Q O T  
J B K H L E I W M J I T C Y H  
G Q B D G E B U O M L D B D A  
T M E C U X E Y C L E R N Z N Y  
M X T M I S K I X R E F P N  
Y M H W D F F D I B Z P O N N  
R T L W E H T E R A Z A N B Q  
S Y E W D I Y A I H S T C J T  
T A H C Y L I M A F I O O W J  
W Z E H N A Z A R E T H C E J  
E K M D E D I U G F N O F O D

**SMARTSEARCHERS** FIND  
THESE **TEN** WORDS EITHER  
**ACROSS** OR **DOWN**



**BETHANY**  
**JOY**



**GALILEE**  
**MARY**



**NAZARETH**  
**FAMILY**



**BETHLEHEM**  
**GUIDED**



**SUPERSEARCHERS** FIND  
THE WORDS **BACKWARDS**  
OR **DIAGONALLY**

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Silent night, Holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright.  
'Round yon virgin mother and Child;  
Holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, Holy night,  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia".  
Christ the Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, Holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from Thy Holy Face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

The lyrics for Silent Night were written  
by a young Austrian priest from Salzburg,  
Fr. Joseph Mohr (1792-1848).

It was first publicly sung at Midnight Mass on  
Christmas Eve, 1818 at St. Nikolaus Church  
in Oberndorf, Austria.